

# Iron County Economic Events

***Updated 09/15/03***

A new study shows that a substantial number of shoppers who live outside of Iron County come into Cedar City at least once a month to shop. During a presentation at Thursday's Cedar City Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon, Cedar City-Iron County Economic Director Clark Krause presented the results of the survey that show 100 percent of the households in Beaver and Garfield counties and 70 percent of the households in Kane County shop at least once a month in the city. The study, conducted by Meridian Consulting Group, reveals that there are at least 31,623 households that shop in Cedar City on a regular basis. Those households are located spread across Iron, Beaver, Garfield, Kane, Millard, Piute, Emery, Wayne, Sevier and Washington counties, as well as Lincoln County, Nev. The numbers vary from the high draw from the Iron, Beaver, Garfield and Kane county areas to a low of 1.5 percent of the households from Washington County. The study also included projected growth estimates, which increases the number of households in that multi-county area that will shop in Cedar City five years from now by at least 6,000. *The Spectrum, 9/12/03*

Iron County Commissioners have approved the first property tax hike in the county in more than two decades. The tax means an annual increase of about \$18 on a home valued at \$100,000. The tax hike was needed, commissioners said, because of budget cuts that forced the state to bail out of its partnership with the county in ownership of the jail. It left the county in the position of having to pay off the facility as well as make up a \$1.8 million deficit in state spending that was previously budgeted for the jail. *Salt Lake Tribune, 9/3/03*

During July, the Cedar City hotel/motel occupancy rate measured 80.4 percent compared to 66 percent statewide. *Salt Lake Tribune, 8/27/03*

It was touch and go for a few months for Goer West Manufacturing when their parent company, RHC Spacemaster, filed for bankruptcy in February. Now, the company can breathe easy with the recent acquisition by Leggett & Platt. On July 10, Leggett & Platt purchased RHC that owned Goer. They have more than 30,000 employees world-wide and are one of the five largest manufacturers of store fixtures. The formal announcement came Wednesday on the heels of the public notice that Lozier Corporation had purchased the O'Sullivan building off Highway 56. Both companies provide retail stores with fixtures and displays. *The Spectrum 8/22/03*

Manufacturing will begin again in a building that has sat vacant on state Route 56 in west Cedar City for the past two years. The Lozier Corp., which manufactures metal retail store fixtures, will start a manufacturing facility in the former O'Sullivan Industries building. The company initially will employ 100 people, a number that could grow to 300 in the next five years. Lozier anticipates an initial investment in the community of about \$10 million. The state has offered Lozier a \$400,000 grant from the Utah Industrial

Assistance Fund if it employs 200 people in three years. Lozier will receive the grant only if the workers earn 25 percent more than the \$21,000 average annual income of Iron County residents. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8/21/03

The city came \$1 million closer to a new airport terminal Wednesday night when airport manager Steve Farmer told the city council that the Federal Aviation Administration certified there were at least 10,000 enplanements in Cedar City last year. It's the third consecutive year that the city has qualified for the \$1 million grant from the FAA. The additional money will take another healthy bite out of the cost of the new \$5.4-million terminal. The news is even more impressive, Farmer said, when taking into account the downtrend in air travel. Farmer said SkyWest, which provides air service to Cedar City, has been down in ticketing, however, there were more than 2,000 non-SkyWest enplanements last year. *The Spectrum*, 8/14/03

Consolidated Freightways said Wednesday it will sell its distribution facility at 500 N. 3151 West in Cedar City through an Aug. 14 auction. The property is a four-door distribution facility on 1.5 acres and has been closed to operations since Sept. 3, when the 74-year-old company filed for bankruptcy protection. Five employees worked at the facility. Since then, the company has been liquidating its assets under orders of the bankruptcy court. The move is part of the company's sale of 220 properties. So far, 112 properties have been sold for a total of \$227.9 million. *Deseret News*, 8/07/03

After being in the planning stages on and off for at least five years, the City Council has approved a master plan proposed by the Utah State Institutional Trust Lands Administration, (SITLA) to build 200 homes on land it owns at the bottom of Stephen's Canyon and on property it will get from the city in a land trade. When finished, most of the homes in the triangular layout of the main project will rise from the desert like an upscale residential island, surrounded on three sides by new or modified fairways of the city-owned Cedar Ridge Golf Course. SITLA has proposed building two new golf holes on what is now SITLA property and turning it over to the city in exchange for about 20 acres along the fairway of an existing golf hole on city property. SITLA also will rebuild a golf hole on city property at its expense and construct a retention pond to collect runoff. Homeowners who currently live adjacent to the golf course say the years of building the new houses -- planned in seven phases on 284 acres -- will drop their property values and crowd the view of the canyon behind Knob Hill that cuts into land owned mainly by the Bureau of Land Management. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7/28/03

Enoch has approved the largest budget in city history. The \$1.8 million all-inclusive budget for fiscal 2003-04 includes a capital improvement fund that was set up after auditors hired by the state deemed the city had excess funds in the general fund balance. New city appropriations approved by the council include \$8,000 designated for city park development and \$49,000 for street development and road repair. *The Spectrum*, 7/4/03

The federal government has designated the entire state of Utah a natural disaster area

as a result of prolonged drought conditions, insect infestations and high winds. The designation makes farmers in all 29 counties eligible to be considered for low-interest emergency loans from the Farm Service Agency. Utah is in its fifth year of drought, and the USDA's Palmer drought index ranked the state the nation's driest. What's being offered is low-interest loans and possible future assistance when it is made available by federal and state agencies. *Deseret News*, 7/2/03

State economic developers agreed Tuesday to offer a \$400,000 grant to Lozier Corp. of Omaha, Neb., to help persuade the privately held provider of retail store fixtures to add about 200 jobs in Cedar City. The grant from the state's Industrial Assistance Fund (IAF), contingent upon the company's expansion in Utah, is designed to help defray the costs of starting up a new manufacturing facility. Members of the Board of Business and Economic Development, in approving the grant, declined to name Lozier or discuss any aspect of the company's request for grant money, citing a confidentiality agreement. The state also declined to name or discuss Cascades Inc., a Canadian company that has been approved for a \$150,000 grant. The company also may expand in Cedar City, adding about 100 jobs. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7/2/03

Agreements have been signed between the Providence Center at the south Interstate 15 interchange in Cedar City and developers representing Walgreens, Holiday Inn, Downeast Outfitters, Gandolfo's restaurant and a major video outlet. A steak and seafood restaurant called Dirty Pierre's is also planned, and negotiations are under way with Lowe's and Home Depot, two leading home improvement centers, to build stores at the center. Construction has already begun on the Downeast Outfitters and Gandolfo's sites. The 80-room Holiday Inn Express hotel is scheduled to open next March and Walgreen's will break ground in about seven months. In the past, Cedar City was often overlooked by the national chain stores because of its small market. However, a new study of the area reveals that the rural shopping community numbers in the vicinity of 99,000. *The Spectrum*, 6/28/03

The vacancy rate at Cedar City hotels/motels registered 47 percent in May according to the Rocky Mountain Lodging Report. *Salt Lake Tribune* 6/24/03

O'Sullivan Industries Inc. has sold a 523,567-square-foot building in Cedar City to an undisclosed Midwest-based buyer who will use the facility for manufacturing operations. The building is on 78 acres, and the sale price was \$7.15 million. O'Sullivan manufactures ready-to-assemble furniture and has a line of home office products. The company had used the Cedar City facility for manufacturing but disposed of it as part of a consolidation. *Deseret News*, 6/18/03

Local communities will soon benefit from a grant distributed by the Utah Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security. Region IV, which includes Beaver, Garfield, Iron, Kane and Washington counties, received \$375,005 from the state homeland security grant, part of nearly \$3.9 million awarded across the state. The 2003 grant came from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office of Domestic Preparedness, according to a news release from the Department of

Public Safety, Division of Emergency Services and Homeland Security. Region IV decided to use the money awarded to them to improve communications devices and purchase communication devices to allow cities to speak with other cities -- like St. George to Beaver. *The Spectrum*, 6/13/03

More than 8,000 Cedar City residents and about as many amateur athletes from around Utah gathered in the Eccles Coliseum on the campus of Southern Utah University on Thursday night to participate in the opening ceremonies of the 18th annual Utah Summer Games. The Games, consisting of a variety of athletic events from arm wrestling to volley ball, will be held at various venues in the Cedar City area until June 21. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6/13/03

The "Affordable Housing in Utah Cities" study from the University of Utah's Bureau of Economic and Business Research ranks 52 cities based on the percentage of affordable units built between 1997 and 2002. The report defines an affordable dwelling as one with a monthly rental or mortgage payment that a family earning 80 percent or less of their county's median income would be able to afford without spending more than one-third of their pay on housing. Cedar City ranked fourth in the listing of most affordable Utah cities. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6/7/03

The Community Impact Board has approved Iron County's application to purchase the state's portion of the county jail. Iron County Recorder David Yardley said the board approved the application for assistance to fund a \$1.6 million bond at 2 percent interest. Iron County Sheriff Dude Benson said the initial concern over the state-county transference has turned out for the best because the county has been able to contract with the U.S. Marshals Service to house federal inmates. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 5/28/03

A child enrichment facility that serves children from infancy to 12 years old is expanding its services to include secular private schooling this fall. Ab Initio Academy, Inc., first opened in 1997 and began operating at its current location in Cedar City during February 2003. It is in the process of constructing a 20,000-square-foot building by Cross Hollows Intermediate School to accommodate up to 250 children for child care, preschool and private school services. *The Spectrum*, 5/25/03

It will cost Enoch \$40,000 to find out if its 3,500 residents would benefit from joining the Utah Telecommunications Open Infrastructure Agency. The agency was formed in April 2002 by an interlocal agreement between 18 cities to build the \$450 million fiber-optic highway from Brigham City in northern Utah to Cedar City in the south. The cable is intended to provide residents with high-speed television, Internet and telephone access through competing providers that would lease bandwidth on the system. A feasibility study released this week for the 18 original communities favored the concept technologically and economically. Former Cedar City Manager Joe Melling, who sits on UTOPIA's executive committee, told the Enoch City Council Wednesday that in order to hook into the system, it must first pay for a \$40,000 feasibility study of its own. If the study is positive, the agency would repay the city for its cost. If the study finds it would make no sense to join, then Enoch would lose the \$40,000. Melling said UTOPIA will

issue revenue bonds to build the system so there is no financial liability to taxpayers. Enoch Mayor Patrick Franks said the city wanted time before deciding to see if there are alternatives for funding the feasibility study without dipping into the city's general fund. *Salt Lake Tribune, 5/24/03*

Cedar City's April hotel occupancy rate was 43 percent, according to Rocky Mountain Lodging Report figures. Statewide occupancy rates measured 58 percent. *Salt Lake Tribune, 5/22/03*

The issuance of \$2.5 million in general obligation bonds for the library's construction was finalized by the City Council. The money will augment a \$2.5 million low-interest loan the city received earlier from the Permanent Community Impact board, that uses royalties paid to the state by mining and energy companies to help finance public projects in Utah communities. Cedar City voters approved the bond issue with a 72 percent majority in 2001. It will increase property taxes on a \$150,000 home by about \$40 a year over the 15-year life of the bonds. Construction of the new \$5 million facility began in October on a 1.9-acre parcel of land on 100 East adjacent to the city's Main Street park, purchased for \$250,000. It is scheduled to be completed in August when the move from the old library will begin in time to dedicate the building in September. *Salt Lake Tribune, 5/6/03*

Tennessee-based Hampton said it has opened The Hampton Inn—Cedar City as the first of the brand's "small town" Hampton Inns. The Inn has 58 rooms, 38-percent fewer than a typical Hampton Inn. *Deseret News, 4/16/03*

Shrinking enrollment has severely increased the budget cuts that have already hit Southern Utah University hard. The latest round of cuts, a slice of \$750,00 from the university's budget, took a third of the funding from one major program, will prevent raises again this year for faculty and staff and will result in a reduction in the university's health care package. *The Spectrum, 4/13/03*

Registration is under way for athletes who want to compete at this year's Utah Summer Games in Cedar City. Between 8,000 and 10,000 competitors are expected to converge at Southern Utah University for the June Games. *Salt Lake Tribune, 4/11/03*

The Seasons at Mesa Hills, a planned unit development proposed for the south-end of Cedar City was unanimously approved by the City Council. *The Spectrum, 3/27/03*

Recently, a national magazine, "Where to Retire," listed Cedar city among 10 potential retirement communities with desirable "sun and snow." *The Spectrum, 3/19/03*

Beryl may get bus service if recommended by the Community Transportation Association of America. The Cedar City Chamber of Commerce recently received word that the group had approved its application for study. The group administers programs for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which supplies its funding. Cedar City just launched a two-bus service, which could be expanded. *Salt Lake Tribune* 3/16/03

Cedar City's first community transportation system is now in service. The Cedar Area Transportation System (CATS) is funded primarily by a grant from the federal government. *The Spectrum*, 3/2/03

A high-tech charter high school is now in the planning states for Iron County. The school will be housed in the Southwest Applied Technology Center and offer students specialized training in math, science and engineering. The school district has a \$10,000 planning grant and will take study the current plan. *The Spectrum*, 2/26/03

According to the Rocky Mountain Lodging Report, Cedar City lodging establishments had the toughest month in the state during January with only 30 percent of rooms filled on an average night. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2/25/03

Plans for Cedar City's new 14,500 square-foot airport terminal have been unveiled. The new terminal will be built in three stages to help offset the estimated \$5.4 million cost, with groundbreaking as early as a year from now and usage of the terminal beginning about a year after that. So far, the city has \$2.3 million available for the project. *The Spectrum*, 2/23/03

Intermountain Health Care has completed construction of its new Valley View Medical Center in Cedar City. The new \$32-million hospital replaces the hospital across town that has served Cedar City since 1964. The new 113,000-square-foot hospital will now be able to care for premature babies. Along with the latest medical equipment, the hospital has 42 beds. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 12/13/03

Cedar City will soon have a convention center. The new center will be in the downtown area as part of the Heritage Center, a 1,000-seat theater that opened last summer. The space for the convention facility is owned by Iron County and will have room to accommodate 1,000 people. The county will use a \$2.5 million loan granted by the Utah Permanent Community Impact Fund to help cover the \$3 million cost of the project. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2/13/03

The widening of state Road 20 has begun. The \$15 million project will widen the road from 25 to 32 feet to allow two 12-foot lanes and a six-foot shoulder. Construction should be completed by November. *The Spectrum*, 2/6/03

Iron County Care and Share has received a \$10,000 grant from the Crusade for the Homeless, a four-year-old Utah foundation created to provide services for the needy. The money will be used to begin improvements on the property Care and Share purchased to build a new facility. The agency received a \$150,000 Community Development Block grant to purchase the property. *The Spectrum*, 1/18/03

Infinium, and Allied and Market-Reps.Com have shut their doors due to an investigation by the U.S. Secret Service. The company is currently been assigned court-appointed receivers. Several hundred employees have lost their jobs. *The Spectrum*, 1/17/03

The Big Kmart store in Cedar City will be one of 326 stores nationwide that will close. The average store will lay off about 100 jobs. *The Spectrum*, 1/15/03

Ground has been broken and dedicated for the new Christ the King Catholic Complex in Cedar City. *The Spectrum*, 1/13/03

Kmart Corp. announced plans to close an additional 326 stores to emerge from bankruptcy by April 30. The store closings are subject to court approval. The Cedar City Kmart is on the list of store closures. *Deseret News* 1/14/03

A new investor group is taking over majority ownership of Cedar City-based Metalcraft Technologies Inc. and is providing the aerospace industry supplier with a much-needed infusion of new capital. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 1/9/03

Overall Iron County tourism counts for last year came in at a healthy 6 to 7-percent increase. Transient room taxes should top \$400,000 for 2002—on par with 1999, which was a record year. *The Spectrum*, 01/03/02

The state is offering an incentive of \$150,000 to attract a company that could create 100 new jobs in Cedar City. The name of the company has not been released but the company is considering opening a paper processing facility in Iron County. The company will receive a maximum performance-based incentive of \$150,000 or \$1,500 per employee. It must commit to keep its operation in Utah for five years. *Deseret News*, 12/21/02

The Iron County Commission has approved a county tax rate increase for 2003. County taxes will go up from 1.67 percent to 2.361 percent. For homeowners with a primary residence worth \$100,000 will pay an extra 37.90 in county taxes. *The Spectrum*, 12/20/02

Aunt B's Family Emporium has opened in Enoch. The business is modeled after the old-fashioned appeal of a small-town general store. *The Spectrum*, 12/01/02

Southern Utah University is considering a 17 to 19 percent tuition increase next year on top of the already statewide approved increased of 4.5 percent. *Salt Lake Tribune* 11/21/02

Brian Head Ski Resort is planning the installation of two lifts that will tie together the upper and lower mountain. Officials hope to have the lifts in place by next summer. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11/03/02

Rural Utah counties preparing budgets for next year may face cutbacks in federal PILT funds. Since 1977, the federal government has provided "payment in lieu of taxes" funds to counties with large tracts of nontaxable federal land. The federal budget for 2003 has yet to be approved, and President Bush wants to cut PILT money by 23.5 percent. Utah is fifth in the nation in PILT funding, behind California. In 2002, Utah received more than \$16 million. *Deseret News*, 10/15/02

Enrollment has dropped about 3.5 percent at Southern Utah University. The recession and the fact that SUU is a "residential campus" have affected enrollment figures. *The Spectrum*, 9/20/02

Utah ranchers, hit hard by drought, will soon receive millions of dollars in immediate federal aid. The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it would release \$752 million in cash to relieve drought-stricken livestock in 37 states. Utah is one of seven states that has declared a statewide drought disaster, and therefore, will qualify for a large share of the money. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 09/20/02

Bolstered by the Utah Shakespearean Festival, Cedar City's hotels posted the best numbers of any Utah market this July. On any given night, 82 percent of the city's rooms were filled, rewarding hoteliers with an average nightly fee of \$68.25. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8/27/02

The Cedar City Council unanimously approved to measures to help North America Packaging Co. (NAMPAC) in its efforts to build a manufacturing plant in the Cedar City area. The council authorized of \$2 million in sales tax revenue bonds to build a railroad spur to the NAMPAC site and the issuance of \$4 million in industrial revenue bonds to help the company in its relocation efforts. *The Spectrum*, 8/15/02

Iron County has received a \$100,000 loan from the Community Impact Board to help build an addition to the county's paramedic facility, including a training room, sleeping area, parking lot and tow more bays for emergency vehicles. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8/8/02

Convergys Corp., with about 600 workers at its Cedar City call center, will hire 500 to 600 workers to meet client needs. The number of new jobs to be made available in Cedar City has not been announced. Those hired will earn hourly wages in the \$7.50 to \$8.00 range. *Deseret News*, 8/02/02

Southern Utah University administration announced adjustments in the employees' health-care packages and elimination of six staff positions as a result of state budget cuts. Overall, 21 faculty and staff jobs have been eliminated since budget cuts began earlier in the year. *The Spectrum*, 8/2/02

Southern Utah University and Cedar City are teaming up on a "win-win" water formula



that will increase the city's supplies and decrease the school's bills. The plan calls for SUU to invest \$200,000 toward a new irrigation well, so the school can stop using culinary water and start using secondary water on its landscaping. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7/29/02

North America Packaging Corp. has chosen Cedar City as the site for a new plant. The company selected a pre-existing building, which it will renovate to suit its needs. The plant will employ up to 110 people. The company manufactures rigid industrial packaging, including industrial plastic pails, large plastic bottles, plastic paint cans and plastic drums. *Deseret News*, 7/17/02

Phoenix-based Mesa Airlines is bidding to compete with SkyWest to become the primary carrier for the Cedar City area. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7/10/02

Big-D Construction of Salt Lake City has been awarded the contract to build a 100,000-square-foot addition for the Utah Shakespearean Festival in Cedar City. Big-D will build the Utah Shakespearean Festival Centre for the Performing Arts, which will be made up of three parts: production, retail/food service and plaza. Start and completion dates have not been announced. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7/6/02

The Cedar City Council has decided to go forward with a \$1.6 million project to bring a railroad spur into the city's industrial complex and split off emergency flood drainage away from the airport. The Council believes this step will increase the value of current industrial property and provide recruiting incentives for new businesses. *The Spectrum*, 7/2/02

Budget Blinds of Southern Utah recently opened in Cedar City. *Salt Lake Tribune*, 6/25/02